US Army Corps of Engineers
North Central Division

GREAT LAKES LEVELS UPDATE NO. 24 1 JULY 1987

Precipitation on the upper Great Lakes was again much below average while the lower lakes received above average rainfall during the month of June. Lake Superior received less than 50% of normal precipitation, while the Michigan-Huron basin was at 80%. However, Lakes Erie and Ontario stood at 140% and 120% of normal according to preliminary reports. The lake level situation and outlook continues to improve, as can be seen on the attached Monthly Bulletin. Lakes Superior and Ontario are at their long-term mean monthly levels. However, the middle lakes, Lakes Michigan-Huron, St. Clair and Erie, are still high and could have significant flooding and cause severe erosion during the next fall and spring storm seasons.

The International Joint Commission (IJC) is continuing to direct the outflows for Lakes Superior and Ontario. The Lake Superior outflow according to Plan 1977 is continuing during July and will decrease from 76,000 cubic feet per second (cfs) to a discharge of about 55,000 cfs. The Lake Ontario outflow continues to be regulated under an emergency action known as Criterion (k) and provided for in the IJC's Orders of Approval. During June the discharges down the St. Lawrence River were decreased slightly as Lake Ontario continued its seasonal decline. The emergency action through June has reduced the Lake Ontario level by about 2-1/2 feet below the level that would have occurred without regulation.

Under the authority of Public Law 84-99, the Corps of Engineers has continued with the Advance Measures program, which consists of constructing preventive works prior to a flood threat to life and property. To date, construction has been completed at eight project sites and is pending or underway at five others, all of which are located in Illinois, Michigan and Ohio. These and any remaining viable projects will be expedited as much as possible to ensure completion either prior to the next fall or spring storm seasons.

The Corps is also authorized to assist local communities in responding to actual flooding situations, to supplement maximum state and local efforts. Requests for assistance should be directed through local and state disaster assistance agencies. For Great Lakes basin technical assistance or information, please contact one of the following Corps of Engineers District Offices:

For New York, Penn. & Ohio
Colonel Daniel R. Clark
Cdr, Buffalo District
1776 Niagara Street
Buffalo, NY 14207-3199
(716) 876-5454-Ext. 2201

For Mich., Minn. & Wisc.
Colonel Robert F. Harris
Cdr, Detroit District
P.O. Box 1027
Detroit, MI 48231-1027
(313) 226-6440 or
226-6441

For Ill. & Indiana
LTC Jess J. Franco
Cdr, Chicago District
219 S. Dearborn St.
6th Floor
Chicago, IL 60604-1797
(312) 353-6400

You can still get the "Help Yourself" brochure from the District Offices listed above or from this office: North Central Division, 536 South Clark Street, Chicago, Illinois 60605-1592, telephone: (312) 353-6364.

Near-shore wave warnings are provided by various National Weather Service Offices for certain portions of the Great Lakes. Information can normally be heard on the National Weather Service's local weather radio broadcasts.

The Corps of Engineers' "Self-Help" program of distributing sandbags, sand and plastic sheeting to threatened communities is continuing. In view of the current and predicted lake levels, it is our intention to continue the program through next spring. You should call your local or state disaster assistance agencies to obtain materials and assistance under this program.

On the IJC's Great Lakes water level study, development of study plans continues. Copies of the IJC's Lake Levels Study Directive are available from both the U.S. and Canadian Section Offices of the IJC.

You have my assurance that these updates will continue to accompany the monthly bulletin until all the lakes return to safe levels.

JOSEPH PRATT
Brigadier General, USA
Commanding